Status of underground mining

*527. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of underground mining in India; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to increase underground mining in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN) : (a) Producing subsidiary companies of Coal India Limited (CIL) and Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. (SCCL) together produced 64.4 million tonnes of coal from Underground mines in 2000-2001 which constitutes about 21.6% of total coal produced in these two companies. Coal production by CIL is spread in various States *viz.* Orissa, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Assam/Meghalaya. Coal production by SCCL is confined in the State of Andhra Pradesh only.

As on 1-4-2001, there are 306 underground mines in CIL and 56 underground mines in SCCL. During 2000-01, coal production from underground mines in CIL was 50.59 million tonnes which is about 19% of its total coal production. In SCCL, during the same period, production from underground mines was 13.78 million tonnes which constitutes about 45% of its total coal production.

(b) Various steps taken to increase production from underground mines in CILand SCCL include :

(i) Introduction of Mass Production Technologies.

(ii) Increased adoption of Intermediate technology using Side Discharge Loaders (SDLs) and Load Haul Dumpers (LHDs).

(iii) Introduction of Blasting Gallery Method for thick seams.

(iv) Introduction of modern mine management practices to make underground operations more profitable and competitive.

(v) Effective spare management system for mechanised mining operations.

Bottlenecks in tourist travel to India

*528. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to State :

(a) whether it is a fact that for the foreign tourists, India is considered a high cost destination;